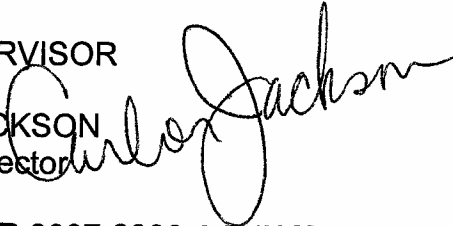


Housing Authority - County of Los Angeles

March 14, 2007

TO: EACH SUPERVISOR

FROM: CARLOS JACKSON
Executive Director



SUBJECT: FISCAL YEAR 2007-2008 AGENCY PLAN

The purpose of this memo is to provide you with information regarding the development of the Fiscal Year (FY) 2007-2008 Agency Plan. The Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act of 1998 (QHWRA) requires Public Housing Agencies (PHAs) to submit an Agency Plan to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The Agency Plan identifies key policy items and financial resources for both the Public Housing and Section 8 programs. The Agency Plan must be submitted to HUD for approval by April 17, 2007.

In accordance with QHWRA, the Housing Authority initiated the following activities:

- Form a Resident Advisory Board (RAB)

This year, the Housing Authority actively recruited Section 8 participants and Public Housing Resident Council members to participate in the RAB for the Agency Plan process. In recruiting for the Section 8 RAB, a recruiting announcement was sent to all Section 8 participants. In recruiting for the Public Housing RAB, recruitment flyers were distributed to all Resident Councils. There were a total of 29 RAB participants and a total of seven meetings were held.

- Public Outreach Activities and Board of Commissioners' Approval

In addition to the RAB, the Housing Authority is required to have a 45-day public review and comment period, which extended from December 29, 2006 through February 11, 2007. During the review period, the Agency Plan and all required attachments must be available to the public. All comments must be submitted to HUD along with the Agency Plan. Comments were received after the public comment period from one resident at Foothill Villa. Please see attached. There were no other relevant comments received.

During the public review and comment period, summaries of the Agency Plan were made available in the following languages: Spanish, Russian, Korean, Braille and Chinese. The Agency Plan was made available at nine libraries, 11 housing developments, the South Whittier Community Resource Center, Housing Authority administrative offices, and on the Housing Authority website.

EACH SUPERVISOR

March 14, 2007

Page 2

Availability of the Agency Plan documents and summaries were publicized in a December 2006 letter sent to all Public Housing residents, and in the January 2007 Section 8 Tenant Talk newsletter. Additionally, a public notice announcing the 45-day Public Review and Comment Period and Public Hearing date was published in December 2006 in the Los Angeles Times, La Opinion, the Daily News, Wave Community Newspaper, International Daily News, L.A. Sentinel and the Long Beach Press Telegram.

The Housing Authority received approval of the Agency Plan from the Housing Commission on February 28, 2007 and will request approval from the Board of Commissioners at the March 27, 2007 public hearing.

The Housing Authority is proposing the following major changes:

- **AGENCY PLAN**

1. VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT

In accordance with the Violence Against Women and Department of Justice Reauthorization Act of 2005, the Housing Authority included a description of goals, policies, and programs that are in place to serve the needs of victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking.

2. PROJECT-BASED VOUCHER PROGRAM

The Housing Authority has revised the existing goal to expand the supply of assisted housing to include the implementation of a Project-Based Voucher Program.

- **CONVENTIONAL PUBLIC HOUSING PROGRAM**

1. VETERANS PREFERENCE

HUD regulations give the Housing Authority the ability to create a system of local, or admissions, preferences to meet local housing needs. In order of priority, Public Housing currently gives admissions preference to:

1. Homeless families which include victims of domestic violence and emancipated youth aging out of Foster Care;
2. Families who live and/or work in unincorporated Los Angeles County whom are Veterans or surviving spouses of Veterans;
3. All other families who live and/or work in unincorporated Los Angeles County;
4. Families who do not live or work in unincorporated Los Angeles County whom are Veterans or surviving spouses of Veterans;

EACH SUPERVISOR

March 14, 2007

Page 3

5. All other families that do not live or work in unincorporated Los Angeles County.

In accordance with the State of California Health and Safety Code 34322.2, the Housing Authority will now give priority to veterans, members of the armed forces and families of both within each of the above admissions preference categories. Preference categories number 2 and 4 will be removed.

2. ADMISSIONS PREFERENCE

A second priority local admissions preference will be given to applicants that have been displaced by a natural disaster declared by the President of the United States or through a governmental action. Veterans, members of the armed forces and families of both will be given priority in this new admissions preference.

3. VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT

On January 5, 2005, Congress reauthorized the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). In order to comply with VAWA, the Housing Authority will include policies for applicants and participants that are or have been victims of domestic or dating violence, or stalking. The Housing Authority will not deny admission to an applicant who is or has been a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking, if the person otherwise qualifies for assistance. Additionally, the Housing Authority will not evict a current tenant solely because the solely because the resident is or has been a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking.

4. LOITERING

The current chapter in the Admissions and Continued Occupancy regarding the Housing Authority's curfew policies does not describe the Housing Authority's policies on Loitering. This chapter will be revised to include Loitering policies consistent with the Los Angeles County Code section 13.44.

5. DATA SHARING

The Housing Authority currently does not share resident information without authorization, subpoena, court order or medical emergency.

The Housing Authority will now share resident information that is necessary to determine eligibility for County welfare department programs or services for which the client has applied or is receiving, as authorized by the State of California Health and Safety Code, section 34217. This new policy is subject to any applicable confidentiality laws or provisions.

• **SECTION 8 TENANT-BASED PROGRAM**

1. ADMISSIONS PREFERENCE

HUD regulations give the Housing Authority the ability to create a system of local, or admissions, preferences to meet local housing needs. In order of priority, Section 8 currently gives preference to:

1. Families referred through specially funded programs;
2. Families whose assistance was terminated due to a loss of funding;
3. Families residing or working within HACoLA jurisdiction;
4. Families or Individuals who are displaced due to natural disaster or government action;
5. Referrals from law enforcement agencies;
6. The elderly and veterans.

In accordance with the State of California Health and Safety Code 34322.2, the Housing Authority will now give priority to veterans, members of the armed forces and families of both within each of the above admissions preference categories. The term "veterans" will be removed from priority number six.

2. HOMELESS SET-ASIDE

The Housing Authority will enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Los Angeles County Office of Military and Veterans Affairs to expand the existing Section 8 Homeless set-aside program. The Los Angeles County Office of Military and Veterans Affairs will refer homeless veterans to the Housing Authority for Section 8 rental assistance.

On March 28, 2006, your board approved the expansion of the Homeless set-aside program to include an additional fifty vouchers for families that are both homeless and disabled, and individuals who were previously housed, but due to an illness were hospitalized, and lost their housing. The Housing Authority will now further expand the Homeless set-aside program as funding permits. The Housing Authority will receive referrals directly from Los Angeles County Department of Health Services (DHS) for these additional vouchers.

3. OWNER DISAPPROVAL

The Housing Authority has the discretion to disapprove owners from participating in the Section 8 Program for violations of HAP contract obligations including failure to meet State or local housing codes. The Housing Authority will now require owners to comply with local ordinances that require a business license for rental properties. The Housing Authority may disapprove owners for a period of one year.

EACH SUPERVISOR

March 14, 2007

Page 5

The Housing Authority will consider any disapproval of owners on a case-by-case basis after completion of a full investigation. The Housing Authority will attempt to minimize any disruption to Section 8 Program participants resulting from any owner disapproval and will extend participants' housing vouchers, if necessary.

4. VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT

The Section 8 Program will also include policies for applicants and participants that are or have been victims of domestic or dating violence, or stalking as required by the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). These policies preclude the Section 8 Program from denying admissions or terminating participation on the basis that the applicant or participant is a victim of domestic violence.

5. PROJECT-BASED VOUCHERS

In order to preserve the availability of affordable housing inventory the Housing Authority will include policies for a Project-Based Voucher program. The Project-Based Voucher program will increase developer interest in building affordable housing developments in Los Angeles County through supplementing operating costs of affordable developments and ensuring stable occupancy by tying assistance to the unit.

6. DATA SHARING

The Section 8 Program will adopt the new data sharing policy outlined in the ACOP for the Conventional Public Housing Program. As authorized by the State of California Health and Safety Code, section 34217, the Housing Authority will now share Section 8 participant information that is necessary to determine eligibility for County welfare department programs or services for which the client has applied or is receiving.

This new policy is subject to any applicable confidentiality laws and provisions.

7. CRIMINAL BACKGROUND

The Housing Authority currently denies admission to all applicants on parole or probation. This policy exceeds HUD regulations and results in the exclusion of those who commit petty crimes, such as shoplifting and traffic-related offenses. The Housing Authority proposed to modify the policy to admit applicants on parole or probation that are otherwise eligible under HUD regulations. However, after much consideration, it has been decided that the policy will remain as is.

In addition to the changes proposed in the letter sent to your Board on December 22, 2006, the Housing Authority is also proposing the following changes:

EACH SUPERVISOR

March 14, 2007

Page 6

1. INFORMAL REVIEW

In accordance with CFR 982.555, if a participant is terminated from the Section 8 program, the Housing must give the participant an opportunity to an informal hearing. Currently, before the informal hearing a participant may request an appointment to examine any documents in their file that are directly relevant to the hearing. The Housing Authority will now also provide information to participants on relevant documents in the possession of another public agency. The participant will be able to contact the agency and obtain a copy and the Housing Authority may reference the document's contents at the hearing through witness testimony.

In addition, the Housing Authority will also include language to further define the role of the Hearing Officers. The language will indicate that the Hearing Officer controls the informal hearing and may control the scope and method of direct examination and cross examination of witnesses, and control the admission of and determine the relevancy of offered evidence. The Hearing Officers may also question the witnesses and set time limitations for any portion of the informal hearing process. Furthermore, a Hearing Officer is not limited by the rules of evidence as they apply to judicial proceedings and may consider hearsay and other types of information that would typically be excluded in a judicial proceeding.

2. HOUSING QUALITY STANDARDS (HQS)

The Housing Authority currently conducts New Contract, Annual, and Quality Control Inspections in accordance with the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 982.405. The regulation also allows the Housing Authority the discretion to conduct other inspections as needed. The Housing Authority will now conduct Compliance Check/Home Inspections without prior notice to the family or owner. The purpose for this inspection is to verify compliance with the Section 8 program. If a Compliance Check/Home Visit Inspection occurs, the family has the right to refuse to submit and/or participate in an unannounced Compliance Check/Home Visit Inspection or interview.

These changes will be introduced in a motion at the March 27, 2007 Board meeting.

Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at (323) 890-7400.

CJ:KC

AP board memo07-08

c: Board Deputies